

touched upon deserved more extended treatment, especially in relation to the evolution of language. The discussion of iconicity is also tantalizingly brief, but there was no doubt a difficult balance to be sought between focusing on the detail of the analysis, including worked examples, and setting them within a broader theoretical framework. This book is idiosyncratically organized, and an index would have been helpful; the bibliography is limited, but carefully chosen, and reflects the particular focus of the book. The material provided on the accompanying CD is of very great value, especially since non-specialists are mostly obliged to take intonational analysis on trust. With this book, it is possible to follow, and in some cases, as I have shown above, dispute the authors' analysis, but on balance it is far better that the data should generate discussion and controversy than that it should be obscured.

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Meiko Matsumoto, *From simple verbs to periphrastic expressions: The historical development of composite predicates, phrasal verbs and related constructions in English*. Bern, etc.: Lang. 2008.

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Verbs are preeminently words for denoting processes and states, but they have no exclusive right to this role. English speakers wishing to refer, for instance, to an act of helping can of course make use of the simple verb *help* (*someone*), or alternatively of the phrasal verb *help* (*someone*) *out*. But these are by no means their only possibilities. Even just within the range of lexemes derived from the root *help*, they may use a construction in which the act of helping is expressed with a related noun or adjective, such as *give help* (*to someone*), *come to someone's help* or *be helpful* (*to someone*). In

the book under review, Meiko Matsumoto aims to consider the historical development of such constructions in English.

In her first chapter Matsumoto gives a rough indication of what she means by ‘phrasal verb’ and by what she terms ‘complex predicates’ (CPs), such as *give help*. Whereas the former term is standard, the latter (stemming from Cattell 1984) is just one of a whole series that have been proposed for this category in a broader or narrower sense, including ‘complex verbal phrases’ (Jespersen 1937), ‘verbo-nominal phrases’ (Renský 1964), ‘complex verbal structures’ (Nickel 1968), ‘expanded predicates’ (Algeo 1995), ‘group verbs’ (Denison 1993, 1998) and ‘stretched verb constructions’ (Allerton 2002). The additional verbs needed by such constructions (the *give* of *give help*) are variously referred to as ‘transitive copulas’ (Curme 1935), ‘light verbs’ (Jespersen 1935), ‘prime verbs’ (Lieftrink 1973), ‘empty verbs’ (Bolinger 1974), ‘function verbs’ (Nickel 1978) or ‘thin verbs’ (Allerton 2002). Matsumoto’s criticism of previous grammarians for not sufficiently taking account of their predecessors is justified, but may attract the same criticism towards herself.

A more serious weakness is the author’s questionable list of the ‘functional characteristics of CPs’ (pp. 26–32), which seems more like a set of interesting idiosyncratic features (‘dynamic *have*’, ‘active vs passive meanings in CPs with *have* and *take*’, ‘state vs event contrast’, ‘CP verbs taking the same deverbal noun’); these features seem to apply in some cases but not in others. A similar problem seems to apply to the further set of features listed in the following pages (pp. 33–7): adjectival modification of the deverbal noun, for instance, is mentioned with the example *pull/make a funny face*, but *pull a face* (with its very indirect relationship to the verb *face*) does not seem to be a CP at all but rather some other type of collocation. A more relevant point made by the author on adjectives is Akimoto’s (1989) finding that *good* and *great* are the most common ones in CPs (as in *have a good look*, *take a great liking*), but it would have been good to be told also that these adjectives correspond broadly to manner adverbs used with the related simplex verb. A further problematic issue is the treatment of accompanying determiners, on which Matsumoto limply writes that ‘even in PDE *make answer* and *make reply* sometimes take the indefinite article and sometimes do not’ (p. 33). The fact is, however, that, depending on the individual construction, the deverbal noun takes the type of determiner permitted (in the relevant dialect) by its countability type. Allowance must be made for the fact that in some constructions (e.g. *subject to some/an analysis*) the noun has both a countable use and a mass one, while in others (such as *grant admittance* or *make war*, discussed on p. 53), a ‘solo’ (i.e. determiner-free) noun (Allerton 2002: 126, 134) is the only possibility.

A disappointing aspect of this volume is the failure to make clear the full range of structural correspondences between a CP and its related simplex verb structure. The only hint of this is in the distinction made between the patterns labelled [V + N] (e.g. *take a walk*) and [V + N + P] (e.g. *take a look*) where the issue is said to be whether the CP ‘takes a preposition’ or not. But obviously some CPs (such as *take a look* itself!) occur with both patterns, and if, as Matsumoto points out (p. 76), an author like Bunyan happens to use more prepositionless constructions, this can simply be a matter of using a terser style. A preferable way of expressing this point, though, is to ask whether the

deverbal noun prohibits, allows or requires complementation, and what preposition is used. This leaves unmentioned the point that this prepositional complement is in a sense the underlying object of the simplex verb: for instance *attack someone* corresponds to *make an attack on someone*. But other underlying objects (as in *answer someone*) correspond not to prepositional complements, but to an indirect object (cf. *give someone an answer*). Moreover, although the subject of a CP corresponds to a simplex subject (as in the latter case), in some cases it corresponds to an object (e.g. *receive an answer from someone*). Matsumoto seems to be aware of the need for syntactic labelling at two levels, as when she points to the double passivization potential of certain constructions (e.g. *make allowance for someone*), but she does not develop this theme further.

It must be recalled, however, that the main perspective of this volume is historical. Indeed, apart from the first chapter and the brief conclusion, every chapter is concerned with the development of particular constructions through the history of English. The division into chapters is, however, somewhat curious. Chapter 2 examines CPs with *do*, *make* and *give*, while chapter 3 treats CPs with *have* and *take* (which are separated out largely on the basis of having a partly passive interpretation); chapter 4 goes on to concentrate specifically on *have/take a look*. Chapter 5 then considers phrasal verbs, according to the chapter title just with *have* and *take*, but in practice also with *put*, *do*, *draw* and a few others. In chapter 6 the author turns to constructions with ‘body nouns’, such as *have an eye on* (cf. *pull a face* above), in which the object noun is not deverbal, but a basic concrete noun denoting a part of the body; these are not CPs according to the author’s definition (p. 19), although they are comparable, even rival, constructions. The next two chapters represent diversions into only distantly related fields: chapter 7 deals with the idiom *be used to*, and chapter 8 considers verbs of passivization and of happening. Finally, chapter 9 returns to the field of CPs with a look at those which correspond to the verb *hunger*, viz. nominal *have (a) hunger* and adjectival *be hungry*; no mention is made of the fact that such related adjectival constructions are available for many other English verbs, although a page is devoted to translating *be hungry* into a random sample of five West and North European languages.

The organization of all these chapters is very similar and becomes rather predictable for the reader. There is a brief introduction to the topic, followed by a short survey of previous studies. There ensues a consideration of the main topic of the chapter, divided according to differences in pattern, to individual light verbs, to historical period or to author. This is followed by an account of more specialized topics, such as passivization, structure of the eventive noun phrase, and semantic contrasts such as stative/eventive. Each of the main sections has a wealth of examples, and each example is assessed for its interest and relevance. There is plenty here for historically oriented syntacticians, lexicologists and semanticists to chew over.

But in some ways this is an unsatisfactory volume, with a number of general weaknesses. Firstly, as already indicated, the chapters on the *be used to* construction and on passivization and happening are not made relevant to the overall theme. Secondly, no clear distinction is made between fully fledged CPs and ones that are ‘defective’ in the sense that they have no related simplex verb, such as *make noise(s)* and *do mischief/justice/etc.* (referred to on p. 53 and p. 76, respectively). More generally, the

reader feels the lack of an account of the overall range of collocations and idioms and how CPs, on the one hand, and simplex verbs, on the other, fit into this. The relation between simplex verbs and CPs becomes particularly relevant when the examples of alternation are quoted from Mallory (on p. 60). It would also have been interesting to hear the author's views on the lexical relationship between simplex verb lexemes like *see*, *look* or *watch* and figurative metaphors like *keep an eye on*, the topic of chapter 6.

Perhaps the most serious weakness of all is the failure to follow up the leading idea of the title and the introduction: have the various types of periphrastic expressions studied developed from simple verbs? Some book titles are, of course, meant to be provocative rather than to summarize the content of the volume. But this volume seems to be suggesting that more recent stages of English have developed a series of complex lexical verb patterns that were not present (or, at least, not substantially present) in older forms of the language. Readers might therefore be led to expect evidence for a relatively high number of simple verb constructions in the Old English period, but for a relative increase in 'composite predicates, phrasal verbs and related constructions' (the wording of the title) in the time since. Sadly, such evidence is entirely lacking. On the contrary, the 'stretched' constructions under consideration seem to abound at earlier stages in the history of English.

Aside from these general issues a few detailed points need to be raised. Why, for instance, is the expression 'functional types of CP' (pp. 61–2) apparently used in a meaning which amounts to nothing more than 'CPs with different light verbs'? Why is so-called 'dynamic' *have* (meaning 'enjoy' or 'experience') said to have 'gained in dynamism' in British English, when some of the examples cited show a comparable use in ME? Why is there an apparent insistence on a binary stative/eventive distinction of 'Aktionsart' for lexical items designating sleep, when only *be asleep* is truly stative, with *have a sleep* and *fall asleep* different types of event? Why are possessive determiners with a deverbal noun, which are exemplified in various places (as on p. 97), never treated as a unitary phenomenon? Would it not have been possible to consider contrasting body nouns with the same verb (e.g. *believe one's ears/eyes*) in a little more depth? Finally, although Matsumoto seems mostly to be at home interpreting English texts from the medieval period onwards, she has apparently misinterpreted one or two examples: on p. 88 she interprets the following words of Defoe as an example of *have a dinner*:

'...invited him in, and gave him and five Men he *had* with him, a very good Dinner'

while the following late ME text is viewed as an instance of *have a look*:

'Ther nas woman That ones had a look on hym despent'

even though, as David Denison (private communication) confirms, *had* is being used to construct the past perfect form 'have despent' (with *a look* as its object).

This book is thus not without its weaknesses, in particular in syntactic theory, and to a lesser extent in textual analysis. There is, however, a wealth of examples, mostly embedded in longer quotations; indeed they appear to make up as much as one third

of the printed text. Anyone interested in the history of extended verb constructions in English should therefore find this volume a rich source of material.

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Graeme Trousdale & Nikolas Gisborne (eds.), *Constructional approaches to English grammar* (Topics in English Linguistics 57). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008. Pp. vi + 310.

Reviewed by Francisco González-García, University of Almería, Spain

The present collective volume consists of eight articles organized into three parts, viz. 'The English gerund', 'Constructions and corpora' and 'Constructions and lexicalism'. The book is prefaced by a brief introduction by the editors entitled 'Constructional